

REMARKS

Claims 1-24 are pending in this application. Claims 1, 3-7, and 9 stand rejected and claims 2 and 8 are objected to. Applicant wishes to thank the Examiner for the indication of allowance of claims 10-24, and the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 2 and 8. In light of the amendment to the title and remarks set forth below, Applicant respectfully submits that each of the pending claims is in immediate condition for allowance.

Paragraph 2 of the Office Action objects to the title of the invention. Applicant has amended the title of the invention to be "System and Method for Processing Packets." As such, Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the objection to the title.

Claims 1, 3-7, and 9 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 6,553,031 ("Nakamura") in view of JP 403225412 ("Naka"). Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

To establish a *prima facie* case of obviousness, there must be some suggestion or motivation, either in the references themselves or in the knowledge generally available to one of ordinary skill in the art, to modify a reference or combine references to arrive at the claimed subject matter. The prior art references must also teach or suggest all the limitations of the claim in question. See, M.P.E.P. § 706.02(j). A reference can only be used for what it clearly discloses or suggests. See, In re Hummer, 113 U.S.P.Q. 66 (C.C.P.A. 1957); In re Stencel, 4 U.S.P.Q.2d 1071, 1073 (Fed. Cir. 1987). Here, the references, whether taken individually or in combination, do not disclose or suggest the invention claimed by the Applicant.

Among the limitations of the independent claims present in the cited references is “an address pointer table for storing location information indicating an entry address of each next-hop address stored in the IP flow table and relationship information among entry addresses of next-hop address stored in the IP flow table.

As explicitly claimed, and described in the present specification, the address pointer table stores location information for each next-hop address stored in an IP flow table. Additionally, the address pointer table stores relationship information among entry addresses of next-hop addresses stored in the IP flow table. In other words, the address pointer table provides relationships between entries of the routing table and entries in the IP flow table. By referring to the address pointer table, and specifically the relationship information, a microprocessor can directly find linked IP flows from the IP flow table without searching the IP flow table. Therefore, the table management for encapsulated IP packet flows can be simplified and the time required for packet routing and forwarding processing can be dramatically reduced resulting in improved throughput in the packet switch. Additionally, the address pointer table provides relationships between entries different in structure and attribute of a search key. This allows simplified system configuration of a packet switch requiring aggregate processing of IP flows. This explicitly recited relationship information is not disclosed in the cited references.

In the Office Action, it is noted that Nakamura fails to disclose an address pointer table for storing location information indicating an address of each next-hop address stored in the IP flow table and relationship information among entry addresses of next-hop address stored in the IP flow table. See Office Action at 2. The Office Action then attempts to cure this deficiency in Nakamura using Naka claiming that Naka teaches “the presence of file data on a data storage position control file 22 indicating the leading storage position is recorded as an address pointer in the table 21 (claimed address pointer table). Naka, further, teaches that a target stored position record is

accessed by using the pointer to extract a file data, then a data read means 24 reads the target file out of storage positions of a specified storage device based on the information from the data position setting means 23 (claimed relationship information among entry addresses of next-hop address stored in the IP flow table).” See Office Action at 3. Applicant respectfully disagrees that Naka teaches the explicitly claimed relationship.

In Naka, contrary to the assertion in the Office Action, there is no address pointer cable including a next-hop address and relationship information among entry addresses of next-hop addresses. In Naka, a control table 21 stores an address pointer which points to the storage position of control file 22. A target storage position record is accessed by using the pointer to extract a block number where the file is stored. A data read means 24 reads the target file out of storage based on the information from the data position setting means. However, at no time does Naka disclose that the control table 21 stores relationship information between next-hop addresses. The table 21 merely stores a pointer 21 that indicates the leading storage position of a data file. As such, there is no disclosure of relationship information among entry addresses of next-hop addresses stored in the IP flow table.

Naka fails to disclose finding linked IP flows from an IP flow table without searching the IP flow table. In Naka, every time a file is accessed, the control table 21 and retrieval key are used to access control file 22 which leads to the location where data files are stored. The key and pointer provide setting means 23 with sufficient information so that the data read means knows which storage positions are to be accessed. However, there is no disclosure of a relationship indicating next-hop addresses stored in an IP flow table. As such, Naka fails to disclose the explicitly recited limitations in independent claims 1, 3-7, and 9.

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Applicant has responded to all of the rejections and objections recited in the Office Action. Reconsideration and a Notice of Allowance for all of the pending claims are therefore respectfully requested.

In view of the above, each of the presently pending claims in this application is believed to be in immediate condition for allowance. Accordingly, the Examiner is respectfully requested to withdraw the outstanding rejection of the claims and to pass this application to issue.

If the Examiner believes an interview would be of assistance, the Examiner is welcome to contact the undersigned at the number listed below.

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Respectfully submitted,

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